FEDERAL CITY PERFORMING ARTS ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
November 17, 1993
Levine School

MINUTES

Directors: Present: Boykin, Brayton, Dorr, Fiorito, Gerard, Payich, Streit, Wheeler, Wolfe, Ziskind

Absent: Madigan, Smith (no proxies assigned)

Staff: Holloway, McClelland

The meeting began at 7:34 P.M.

REVIEW OF OCTOBER 20, 1993 MINUTES

The minutes for October 20, 1993, were corrected as follows:

Page two, line one, insert "to" between "have" and "collect" so that it reads "we have to collect sales tax..."

Page two paragraph two, last line, insert "annualized" between "estimated" and "cost".

Page two, delete the fifth paragraph from the bottom under the **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**. In its place, insert the following: Brayton noted that the Chorus and small ensemble groups have a fixed fee scale. For the Chorus, it is $1,000, for Potomac Fever and A Few Good Men, it is $500, and for Gentlemen Quarterly (now defunct), it is $200.

Page three, begin the last sentence in the opening paragraph with "Streit said," and add quotation marks around the last sentence.

Page three, change the first word in the second line of the third paragraph under **Repertory Advisory Committee Report** to read "they".

Page three, delete the last sentence in the fourth paragraph under the **Repertory Advisory Committee Report**.

Page four, delete the last sentence in paragraph two under **OTHER BUSINESS**. Replace it as follows: Fiorito gave a copy of the raw data to Holloway.

Motion to approve minutes as amended: Wolfe. Second: Brayton. Unanimously approved.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Streit requested clarification of the printing expense under Code 701. According to McClelland, it was for printing of invitations to Capital Club's Membership Gala.

It was noted that the $4,800 deposit for the L.A. trip will be coming due shortly.

McClelland reported that we are currently $800 over the amount budgeted for expenses. There was discussion of the season subscription effort which appears, so far, to have fallen short. We have fewer season subscribers than last year. McClelland conceded that even the New York Chorus does not have a large number of season subscribers. He suggested that next year's season subscription package be ready by August. This year's package was not ready until September/October. It was noted that having it ready earlier will not necessarily increase season subscription sales.

Ziskind believes part of the problem is that there are not even 1,500 good names on our mailing list. Because many of the names are those of members of other choruses, it is unlikely that many of them would be able to attend one of our concerts. Ziskind thinks that we should review how to add to our mailing list the names of people who have real potential for attending our concerts.

A discussion of dues arrearages followed. Payich said that the Board had the same discussion last year and expressed concern that the Board was wavering on this issue. Streit disagreed. Wolfe noted the concern that a lot of people have not paid dues.

Regarding dues requirements for members on leave of absence, Boykin stated that the bylaws provide for dual status, depending on whether they pay their dues. Streit disagreed and suggested that we check the bylaws on this point.

Wolfe asked McClelland if the number of arrearages was significantly greater than this time last year. McClelland said they are not.

Charlie Merk, our enforcer on dues arrearages, calls everyone who is in arrears.

Ziskind suggested working out a payment schedule for members who are in arrears. All members have been notified that if they are having financial problems, they should contact a Board member. Wheeler believes that this is an embarrassing position for members to find themselves in and, therefore, they are reluctant to talk to Board members. He suggested that the Board approach those members who are in arrears. Streit was concerned that this would seem like badgering, something the Board does not want to do. According to Dorr, the same members are in arrears each year.

McClelland said he needs accurate information to pinpoint who is in arrears.

McClelland reported that, at this point, ticket sales are down. Currently, members have taken out 438 tickets ($8,000 worth). An additional $15,000 worth of tickets must be sold in order to make budget for Holiday concert ticket sales. We printed 800 tickets for each night of which Tom Epps and Steve Herman received 400 apiece. Out of Herman's 400, 100 per night were turned over to Lambda Rising for sale.

Ziskind suggested asking each member to take four tickets. According to McClelland, the auditors frown on this because of the difficulty it presents in keeping track of the tickets. The auditors want the tickets recorded out by ticket numbers as a financial control. Brayton noted that you can't force people to take tickets. Ziskind suggested that we announce the to-date ticket sales. Holloway suggested that we emphasize the expectation that members sell tickets, adding that we create our own audience. Fiorito suggested that it might help if Holloway addresses the members on this issue. Brayton also noted that until the retreat, no one knows if he will like the concert. No one commits himself to selling tickets until he knows he will like the music and this behavior accounts for the paucity of early ticket sales. He doubts that the Chorus will ever change this behavior. Brayton suggested that the crux of the problem is how to appeal to members on an emotional level about the need to sell tickets. Holloway believes the problem is marketing. He noted that our program is season conceived and as such, each concert is part of the overall season experience. It was suggested that we review our marketing tools and clarify our concepts.

Motion to accept the financial report: Dorr. Second: Brayton. The motion unanimously passed.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Streit said that he presented a crystal vase to Michael Milano as a token of the Board's appreciation for his work at the Board retreat.

Streit gave the Board's regrets to D.C. Councilman Jack Evans regarding the invitation to the fundraiser to benefit needy children on December 16th. Streit told Evans that the Chorus has so many commitments and Streit requested more advance notice of such invitations.

The executive board decided to pay for the repair of Richard Dupler's CD player that was damaged at the Chorus retreat. If repairs cost more than $100, Streit will notify the Board.

Streit announced the executive committee's decision (made because no giveaway was involved) to list as a song sponsor on the CD cover the name of any donor who contributes $500 or more to the CD fund. Donors of $100 to $499 will be listed on the CD cover as benefactors. This applies to Chorus members as well. The executive committee made the decision so that it could be announced at the Capital Club Membership Gala.

Wheeler asked if someone would coordinate the accuracy of the donors' names on the CD jacket. Holloway said that we would send each donor a letter informing him/her that your name will be listed as follows, please contact us if there are any errors.

Streit announced that, according to Larry Cohen, the sale of Holiday cards has paid for itself. Cohen requested a printing of additional cards, but Streit thought it better to completely sell out. We decided not to have Lambda Rising sell any of the cards.

In response to Wheeler's complaint about the quality of the cards, it was noted that next year there will be competitive bidding for the printer. Our cost per card was only $.17.

HOLIDAY CONCERT PRODUCTION REPORT

Wheeler did not have a written report, but Streit, Holloway, and Boykin received a draft of the proposed gig sheet for comment. The need to add information (to be provided by Boykin) about where the after concert party will be was noted.

Wheeler said that after an initial rocky start with Ms. Birdsong, he has met with her and Holloway and, so far, everything is going well.

Holloway and Wheeler consulted on riser placement in order to try to reduce the gap that was such a problem last year. A question arose concerning where the Church's Christmas tree will be. Last year the tree was over the baptistery. There was also a concern whether the tree would have tinkling ornaments. Wheeler said he would check on this.

Wheeler reported that Paul Rosstead, who handled lights and sound last year, will do the same this year. Wheeler also reported that Dupler had requested that the Church's downstairs sound booth be made available for the master recording and Rosstead has so agreed. Dupler is working with Rosstead on this. Rosstead must operate the controls because the Church is touchy about who uses the equipment. An assistant will help Rosstead with the lights.

Ken Plonsky will be house manager. We are making progress on obtaining volunteers to usher and to sell holiday cards, CD orders, mini-subscription series, gift certificate for mini-subscription series, etc. We will not sell ornaments and Wheeler must find out

if we will sell tee shirts and buttons. Wheeler was asked if the Church approved the sale of these items. He responded that there is tentative approval, but Ms. Birdsong wants to see the items. Wheeler was also asked whether the Church wanted a cut of the sales. He answered no, but will double check. We will not offer the Church a portion of the sales proceeds.

Wheeler asked the Board to call to his attention anything that may have been overlooked in production planning.

Wheeler discussed options for improving our ability to get helpers to put up risers. The problem of break down of risers after a concert appears to be resolved by the rotation of that responsibility among the various sections.

McClelland asked that it be impressed upon the ushers that he wants all the ticket stubs. It was suggested that one person be assigned the responsibility to collect all the stubs.

The Board decided that the gig sheet must be available to members at rehearsal on Sunday, November 21.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Boykin reported that after a lot of negotiating, Darrell Lewis signed the contract with the Barcelo Hotel (the former Omni Georgetown) for the after concert party.

Given cost control concerns, the Board debated whether to open the after concert party to the audience. Potential attendees include 135 active members, Capital Club members, and four or five ushers. Boykin wondered whether we can afford to invite the audience. Ziskind noted that there is a $10 charge per person. In light of the fiasco at Herb's at the last after concert party, Ziskind urges erring on the side of caution. According to Streit, we have averaged 60 to 80 extra people at parties opened to audience admission. According to Boykin, the food will be a deli platter and the space will accommodate 250 people. Holloway asked why anyone would pay to attend. Boykin replied that a small dance floor is available. Some concern was expressed that if we don't invite the audience, it is a break with tradition. Brayton responded that the tradition is only two years old. Payich believes that, given the current planning, the open invitation might work well and recommended that we give it one more chance. Boykin stressed that the one main entrance easily permits us to restrict access only to those who pay. Members may buy tickets in advance. Boykin requested an additional $500 for expenses. Streit viewed the request as reasonable.

Boykin reported that at last count there were 120 singing members with three or four in as yet unresolved status. The Chorus still retains 31 out of the 40 members who joined this season.

Payich asked how drop outs were handled. Boykin replied that they received a phone call after the third absence and then a subsequent call after any other absence. They will all receive a call again in January. Payich recommended sending a letter in addition to the phone call. Boykin thought this was a good idea.

Boykin announced the following membership events in December.

(1) On Tuesday, December 14, there will be a membership appreciation night at Annies. Roger Edens will distribute the information on this at next week's rehearsal.

(2) On Friday, December 17, there is a carol rehearsal at the home of Eric Korpon and Steve Haber. After the rehearsal, the carolers will begin caroling at Annies and proceed through the DuPont Circle area, ending up in front of Lambda Rising. Lambda Rising's owners suggested this event as a good will gesture.

(3) The Chorus will again carol at NIH on Christmas Eve. This is the eighth year for this event. Phil Rogerson is in charge of this event

Boykin announced Jack Frost's resignation from support staff. Larry Rosen will be the new co-coordinator of Support Staff.

Payich asked how many are on the list for missing too many rehearsals. Boykin replied that there are less than five.

REPERTORY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Holloway delivered the report. There was no written report.

Wheeler announced that he had received a call from Sylvia Kohrn at Lisner asking whether we really needed to use the auditorium on April 12th, as we had reserved. The answer was an emphatic yes.

We lost the original mezzo-soprano we had contracted for, but, fortunately, we have obtained Molly Donnelly. The brass group will be the Monumental Brass.

Payich asked when the Chorus will be voiced? Holloway responded that it was a matter of rehearsal time. Payich mentioned that currently, a lot of tall people are in front.

Holloway presented the commissioned work report (attached) and noted that he is in constant contact with the composer and actively involved in the creative process. The experience from "Hidden

Legacies" provides part of the background. Dennis Coleman asked for more motific themes so the audience has a hook to grab onto. The work's structure has changed from its initial description.

"What's in a Name" represents an attempt to reappropriate derogatory names. There was concern that this might be remembered as the piece about "queers" or "faggots."

Holloway explained that the drag number has a philosophical point. Stonewall is a flash point of gay culture. While it is acknowledged that the role of drag in gay culture then differs from its role today, drag is a significant part of what happened at Stonewall. With this in mind, the vision for "Dream Drag" is to have fabulous drag queens. It is not currently envisioned that Chorus members will participate in the piece, although a few Board members strongly believe that such participation is viable. Holloway said that the number is not meant as a parody of itself. Having professional drag queens perform this number is under active consideration. This particular number is designed to work on a reality and character development level.

Holloway characterized "Stonewall" as interesting and challenging music with strong lyrics, personal in appeal, and dealing in large concepts such as childhood memories, coming out, and gay liberation.

In the waltz number, men will dance a waltz. It is similar to "Left Behind" in "Hidden Legacies." The waltz number is more about today's gay generation acknowledging the contributions of the gay generation of Stonewall.

Dorr asked if the Chorus is on stage for most of "Stonewall". Holloway replied, yes, it is much like "Hidden Legacies" in that respect. It was also noted that the work demands consistent staging in all three cities. Payich asked about the schedule. Holloway replied that the first rehearsal is after the Spring Show. There will be a little less choral singing than in "Hidden Legacies."

COMPUTER REPORT

Madigan was unable to deliver the report. In his place, Fiorito reported that Madigan has a preliminary list of software tools. Users of the computer and software should submit their wish lists for prioritization based on budgetary demands.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE REPORT

Fiorito presented the written report (see attached).

25 donors have provided contributions totaling $1004. This came from our solicitation on the season subscription package. Wolfe attended an organizational meeting with Hal Diamond on the

magic show fundraiser on March 26, 1994, at Tracks. Wolfe will present the proposals at the next Board meeting. We could preview "Our Show of Shows" at that event.

Fiorito reported that we have exceeded the number of paid advertisers from last year. So far, we have netted $17,000 in advertising revenues and we still have a secondary thrust in January and February.

OTHER BUSINESS

Dorr thanked Boykin for the bonding exercise we went through on Sunday morning at the Chorus retreat. According to Dorr, people at his table were in tears.

Dorr suggested subsidizing camp from the general operating budget and using the additional funds to upgrade the quality of any facility we obtain. Dorr liked Camp Roundtree but found the rehearsal space to be cramped. He acknowledged that approving his suggestion would mean that we abandon the idea that the cost of the camp should be a wash. It was also noted that another larger space is available at Camp Roundtree.

Ziskind announced that our United contract for the L.A. trip includes free round trip airfare for a site visit. Ziskind suggested that he or some other Board member take advantage of the free fare to make the site visit. Ziskind's schedule permits him to make the trip during the first quarter of '94.

Ziskind also suggested that we exchange videotapes as a way of coordinating and learning the staging for "Stonewall". This matter will be discussed further at a later date.

Fiorito thanked Ziskind for a great job in putting the L.A. travel package together.

Streit thanked the entire board because of the unprecedented fact that every Board member (11 out of 12) is now a member of Capital Club.

Boykin asked what action we were going to take on the vacant Board seat. Because no one applied, the seat will remain vacant.
It was noted that many of the membership stated that Camp Roundtree was even better than Camp Glyndon.

Motion to adjourn: Brayton. Second: Boykin. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:14 P.M.

Submitted by: **Robert G. Wheeler**
FCPAA Secretary
December 8, 1993